

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-15 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-01 TRSE-00
XMB-04 OPIC-06 LAB-04 EPG-02 SIL-01 OMB-01 DHA-02
/102 W

-----021925Z 096325 /46

R 021715Z MAY 77

FM AMCONSUL MONTREAL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8916
INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMCONSUL CALGARY BY POUCH
AMCONSUL TORONTO BY POUCH
AMCONSUL HALIFAX BY POUCH
AMCONSUL QUEBEC
AMCONSUL WINNIPEG BY POUCH
AMCONSUL VANCOUVER BY POUCH

UNCLAS SECTION 1 OF 2 MONTREAL 707

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, ECON, CA

SUBJ: THE NEWS VIEWS QUEBEC

1. IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME SINCE THERE WAS MUCH IN WAY OF
GOOD NEWS IN QUEBEC'S ANGLOPHONE NEWSPAPERS. BY THIS TIME,
ANGLOPHONES AND ETHNICS ARE PRETTY MUCH INURED TO BAD NEWS,
AND WAITING FOR OTHER SHOE TO DROP IS CONDITION OF LIFE FOR A
GOOD MANY QUEBECKERS THESE DAYS. EVEN SO, READERS OF THE
WEEKEND MONTREAL STAR WERE BARRAGED WITH AN UNUSUALLY HIGH
LEVEL OF DOOM AND GLOOM. AS ARTICLES IN STAR DON'T DIFFER
SIGNIFICANTLY FROM WHAT ONE OFTEN HEARS IN PERSON FROM NON
PQ QUEBECKERS, AND AS THE MEDIA CAN CERTAINLY CONTRIBUTE TO
SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECIES, WE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL
TO PROVIDE FOLLOWING "COUP D'OEIL" OF WHAT MONTREALERS READ
OVER WEEKEND IN ORDER THAT WASHINGTON READERS HAVE SOME SENSE OF
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CURRENT ATMOSPHERE IN MONTREAL. (HEADLINES LISTED FIRST, FOLLOW-
ED BY BRIEF SUMMATION OF ARTICLE.)

2. FRONT PAGE

ITEM: DUPONT MAY LEAVE QUEBEC

QUEBEC'S NEW LANGUAGE LEGISLATION WOULD MEAN A COMPETITIVE DISADVANTAGE FOR LARGE COMPANIES WITH HEAD OFFICES IN MONTREAL BECAUSE THEY WOULD ONLY BE ABLE TO RECRUIT STAFF FROM ONE PROVINCE. NO COMPANY COULD TOLERATE SUCH DISADVANTAGES IN RECRUITING PEOPLE FOR HEAD OFFICE, AND IF THE LEGISLATION IS LEFT AS IT IS, DUPONT WOULD HAVE TO MOVE ITS HEADQUARTERS OUT OF QUEBEC

ITEM: INVESTORS WAITING ON SEPARATION ISSUE

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MINISTER DON JAMIESON SAYS THAT AT LEAST SOME FOREIGN INVESTORS ARE STAYING OUT OF CANADA UNTIL THEY CAN DISCOVER WHETHER QUEBEC WILL SEPARATE.

ITEM: BILL ONE ABOVE 1975 RIGHTS CHARTER (BILL ONE IS NEW LANGUAGE LEGISLATION)

IN FAVORING FRANCOPHONES, NEW LANGUAGE LEGISLATION VIOLATES CIVIL RIGHTS OF MINORITIES. THIS CONTRADICTS REPEATED AVOWALS BY PREMIER LEVESQUE THAT MINORITY RIGHTS WOULD BE PROTECTED UNDER A PARTI-QUEBECOIS GOVERNMENT. (BILL ONE EXPLICITLY PROVIDES THAT QUEBEC'S HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER IS INAPPLICABLE IN LANGUAGE MATTERS.)

ITEM: MORIN WINS CHIRAC SUPPORT

QUEBEC INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS CLAUDE MORIN HEADS HOME FROM HIS THREE-DAY VISIT TO FRANCE WITH AN INVITATION FOR PREMIER LEVESQUE TO PAY AN OFFICIAL CALL NEXT FALL, UNCLASSIFIED

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AND A FLAGRANT DECLARATION OF SUPPORT FOR PROVINCE'S ASPIRATIONS TO INDEPENDENCE FROM PARIS MAYOR JACQUES CHIRAC STILL RINGING IN HIS EARS.

ITEM: CEQ ASKS FOR TOUGHER SCHOOL LAW

YVON CHARBONNEAU, PRESIDENT OF LA CENTRALE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT DU QUEBEC, SAYS HIS 80,000 TEACHER MEMBERS WILL ASK PARTI QUEBECOIS GOVERNMENT TO FORCE ALL NON-ENGLISH PUPILS CURRENTLY ATTENDING ENGLISH SCHOOLS TO RETURN TO FRENCH SCHOOLS NEXT SEPTEMBER. HE SAID TEACHERS WILL NOT TOLERATE THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH OR ANY OTHER LANGUAGE FOREIGN TO THE MAJORITY BEFORE HIGH SCHOOL.

3. OP ED PAGE

ITEM: TRAGIC CONFRONTATION ON BILL ONE, BY DOMINIQUE CLIFT

A MAJOR CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE PARTI-QUEBECOIS AND THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING BUSINESS COMMUNITY SEEMS ALMOST INEVITABLE IN THE LIGHT OF THE LANGUAGE LEGISLATION INTRODUCED THIS WEEK. PROPOSED LEGISLATION SHOWS THAT GOVERNMENT IS NOT PREPARED TO MAKE ANY CONCESSIONS. SITUATION AT HEAD OFFICE OF SUN LIFE INSURANCE ILLUSTRATES NATURE OF CONTROVERSY THAT IS NOW RAGING AND WHICH MIGHT LEAD TO A CORPORATE EXODUS OUT OF QUEBEC. LETTER FROM PRESIDENT OF SUN LIFE TO PREMIER LEVESQUE POINTS OUT THAT OF 1,700 EMPLOYEES AT HEAD OFFICE, 1,485 SPEAK ONLY ENGLISH AND 215 ARE BILINGUAL. NONE IS UNILINGUAL IN FRENCH. (PROBLEM HERE IS WHAT CAN SUN LIFE DO TO COMPLY WITH PQ OBJECTIVES OF FRANCIZATION). SITUATION IS A TRAGEDY SINCE INTRANSIGENCE OF GOVERNMENT AND BUSINESS AFFECTS ULTIMATELY THE LIVELIHOOD OF THOUSANDS OF PERSONS AS WELL AS THE VIABILITY OF HUNDREDS OF OTHER FIRMS

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WHO DO NOT HAVE OPTION OF PULLING OUT OF PROVINCE.

ITEM: (SEVERAL OTHER HEADLINES, ARTICLES ON QUEBEC ISSUE)

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UNCLAS SECTION 2 OF 2 MONTREAL 707

4. REAL ESTATE

ITEM: THREE ARTICLES ON FRONT PAGE OF REAL ESTATE
SECTION WITH FOLLOWING HEADLINES:

- TERRIFIED QUEBECKERS BUY IN NEW YORK

REAL ESTATE BROKERS AND LAND OWNERS REPORT THAT IN-
QUIRIES FROM QUEBECKERS ABOUT HOMES AND BUILDING SITES
HAVE MULTIPLIED BY FACTOR OF 10 SINCE MID-NOVEMBER
ELECTION OF PARTI QUEBECOIS.

- QUEBECKERS LOOK SOUTH

REAL ESTATE BOOM IN NORTHERN VERMONT DUE TO INFLUX OF QUEBECKERS.

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- RUSH IS ON TO GET FLORIDA LOTS

QUEBECKERS ARE MOVING SOUTH IN LARGE NUMBERS AND IN-
VESTING HEAVILY IN FLORIDA PROPERTY. BROKERS SAY
THEY ARE ASTOUNDED AT NUMBER OF QUEBECKERS BUYING
FLORIDA PROPERTY AND BUSINESSES.

5. BUSINESS TODAY

ITEM: WORST OF ALL WORLD FOR CANADA AND PQ

VIEW OF CANADIAN ECONOMY IS GLOOMY, AND THE SITUATION
IS BEING COMPLICATED BY POLITICAL PROBLEMS BETWEEN
QUEBEC AND OTTAWA. MANY ECONOMISTS ARE DOUBTING
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT'S CLAIM THAT QUEBEC CAN ACHIEVE
A REAL GROWTH RATE OF 3-3 1/2 THIS YEAR.

6. COMMENT: THE MONTREAL STAR IS MONTREAL'S SECOND LARGEST NEWS-
PAPER, AFTER FRANCOPHONE LA PRESSE, BUT ITS LARGEST ANGLOPHONE
NEWSPAPER, WITH SIGNIFICANT READERSHIP BY NON-ANGLOPHONE COM-
MUNITY. WHILE THE WEEKEND EDITION PROBABLY REFLECTED AN IN-
ORDINATE QUOTIENT OF PESSIMISM, THE IMPACT IS NOT DIFFERENT
FROM THAT WHICH ONE EXPERIENCES IN ANY GATHERING OF NON-
FRANCOPHONES.

7. THERE IS DEEP CONCERN, AND EVEN FRIGHT, AMONG MONTREAL'S
JEWISH COMMUNITY, WHO SEE THE SPECTER OF RACISM IN PQ POLICY.

IMMIGRANT GROUPS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT FOR FRANCOPHONES IN JOB MARKET AND LOSS OF THEIR RIGHT TO CHOOSE LANGUAGE OF EDUCATION FOR THEIR CHILDREN. MOST ANGLOPHONES ARE EXTREMELY PESSIMISTIC ABOUT FUTURE, AND MANY WHO ARE IN A POSITION TO HEDGE THEIR BETS BY TRANSFERRING ASSETS AND SELLING PROPERTY ARE TRYING TO DO SO. NOT UNEXPECTEDLY, EXODUS IS GREATEST AMONG YOUNG WHO SEE NO REASON TO SUFFER THROUGH NEXT SEVERAL YEARS OF TURMOIL WHEN THEY CAN ADVANCE THEIR CAREERS IN OTHER PROVINCES. IN ATTEMPTING TO GET SOUNDING FROM IM-
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PORTANT FRANCOPHONE BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL COMMUNITY, WE HAVE FOUND THAT MOST, WHILE SUPPORTING AIMS OF PQ LANGUAGE POLICY IN ASSURING PRIMACY OF FRENCH, ARE DISTRESSED AT METHODS OF PQ AND POTENTIAL IMPACT ON ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT. MOST, HOWEVER, ARE RELUCTANT TO SPEAK OUT BECAUSE OF FEAR OF REPRISALS FROM PQ, SUCH AS LOSS OF CONTRACTS.

8. YET AMIDST THE GOLLM, THERE IS THE BEGINNING OF A RALLYING AMONG THOSE WHO ARE OPPOSED TO POLICY AND METHODS OF PQ (SEPTTEL FOLLOWS). TASK IS TO CONVINCE THOSE WHO OPPOSE PQ POLICIES THAT THEY HAVE POWER TO INFLUENCE COURSE OF EVENTS IN QUEBEC, AND THAT ONLY RESPONSE IS TO STAY AND FIGHT, NOT RUN. NATURE OF THEIR RESPONSE WILL BE DECISIVE HOWEVER, AS INTRANSIGENCE AND MENACES WILL ONLY SERVE TO INFLAME EMOTIONS, POLARIZE SIDES, AND MAKE VIABLE SOLUTION EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TO ATTAIN.
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